

BROWNFIELDS

Job Training

Application Process



The United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 10



What is Job Training?

The new Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act ("Brownfields Law" or "the Law," P.L. 107-118) §104(k)(6) allows the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to fund training to facilitate the availability of skilled environmental technicians for the assessment, remediation, and/or preparation for development of brownfield sites.



What is a Brownfields Site?

"Real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant."*

*As defined in §101(39) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended (CERCLA, or Superfund)



The Guidelines

The Guidelines are published annually and although possibly "tweaked" the precepts as prescribed by the Brownfields Law for Job Training Projects (JTP) will remain constant:

- JT Background Information
- Summary of the JT Grants Program
- Application Process Overview
- Proposal Guidelines
- EPA Regional and Headquarters Contacts
- Prohibition on the Use of EPA Funds



Proposal Cover Page

To identify the Brownfields Job Training grant applicant and primary contact information

- A. Applicant Identification: Who is the applicant?
- B. Location: Where is the applicant located?
- C. Contacts: All parties involved and responsible for project proposal.
- D. Cooperative Partners: All parties involved in the implementation of the proposed project
- E. Proposed Project Period: 2 years (or less)
- F. Submission Date: When postmarked or pick-up date



Threshold Criteria

The Threshold Criteria are an un-scored first tier mechanism used to advance, for further review, those applicants that meet critical elements based on criteria developed from precepts as stated in the Brownfields Law.

- Applicant Eligibility (incl. Non-profit status)
- Proximity to a BF Grant Recipient
- No Duplication



Ranking Criteria

- Each element is evaluated and scored according to the completeness of the response. (It is critical that each response is clear, and on point – don't ramble, make each word count)
- Each application will stand on its own merit. Regional personnel are barred from reviewing draft documents.
- Applicants will not be permitted to submit any additional information nor will they be contacted during the review period.



Ranking Criteria, Cont.

- **Community Need (10 Points)**
 - Include Characteristics (EZ/EC) , and Demographics, (Ethnicity breakdown, poverty and unemployment ratio) (Helps draw a clearer picture if contrast is made, i.e. targeted area vs other parts of city, county, state...)
 - Describe the Community's challenges as a result of the impacts from Brownfields
 - Describe How the Community Will Benefit from Proposed Job Training Project (If there is a "Master Plan" for economic revitalization, describe it and how JTP fits)



Ranking Criteria, Cont.

- **Institutional Capacity**
 - Applicant's record regarding recruitment, retention and placement. (Highlight successes and accomplishments)
 - Provide details regarding instructor's credentials and training experience (Years of experience, note area of expertise, special recognition, etc..)
 - Describe institution's and its instructors' relationship with the targeted population and the community (LOS should substantiate claim)



Ranking Criteria, Cont.

- **Ability to Manage Grants**
- **For Existing Grant Recipients, Provide Specifics on Past Grant Management** (quarterly reports submitted, BMS key measures, plans for remaining funds...)
 - For New Applicants provide details about other Federal Grants received (amount, year, function, any adverse audit findings) and your project management system.



Ranking Criteria, Cont.

- **Training Program Objectives and Plans**
 - Describe JTP objectives (Number Recruited, Percentage Retained, Placement Projections; How Many Training Cycles; Curriculum and Training Location; Tracking Methods and Time-Frame)
 - Describe how applicants will be screened, by whom and the screening criteria to be applied.
 - Provide course outline with needed training tools and material. Include list of certificates to be earned at completion of JTP.
 - Describe local incentives and employers' Commitment To Hire



Ranking Criteria, Cont.

- **Budget**
 - Comprehensive Budget is needed
 - Include budget narrative explaining each activity; its relevance to EPA funding authority & proposed JTP
 - Provide cost estimates for each activity to be conducted with EPA funds. (Provide separate budget table for non-EPA costs)



Ranking Criteria, Cont.

- **Budget, Cont.**
- Leveraging is a good Thing!
 - Not required for JTP but indicates that Project is not a “fly by the seat of your pants” operation.
 - Describe what has been done and future plans
 - Shows applicant has vision and long-term goals with sights towards sustainability
 - Shows Applicant understands EPA grant will not fund all aspects needed for a successful JTP. (i.e. job-readiness skills, child care, transportation)



Ranking Criteria, Cont.

- **Budget, Cont.**
 - Recommendations
 - Use Suggested Table Format for Budget
 - Explain Tasks with Short Narratives
 - Explain Account Management Process
 - Be Specific But Not Too Detailed
 - Limit Discussion to Budget Tasks
 - Double check for ineligible costs.



Ranking Criteria, Cont.

- **Community Involvement**
 - Critical Elements
 - Provide Notification Details (e.g., Dates, Agenda, Number of Meetings, Attendee's List)
 - Describe How the Community *Has Been, Is and Will be* Involved in the JTP (list participants, their role in application process, what its role will be in JTP if selected– make sure employers are active participants)
 - Discuss EJ efforts. (If none, state so and why) List Partners, their role in the Community and JTP role (Diversity of Partners Considered Favorably)
 - Letters of Success (LOS) are Crucial (must state **clearly** role in or commitment to JTP)



Ranking Criteria, Cont.

- **Measures of Success**
 - Describe JTP Goals (success indicators should be specific, measurable both quantitatively, and qualitatively and include a time-line)
 - Goal objectives
 - milestones (“in-between” successes)
 - end-stones (as each activity's objective is met)
 - evaluation tools to gauge needs compatibility
 - Describe plans to ensure long-term placement and tracking
 - Reports and other deliverables to be submitted



CAVEAT

Newly mandated EPA Grant Competition Policy will impact the Region's Ability to Review Draft Proposals.

Regional offices are permitted to only answer general guidance and policy questions. Drafts CANNOT BE REVIEWED and NO EDITORIAL COMMENTS, regarding drafts, may be made prior to submission date.



Proposal Assistance

- FAQs and other significant questions and answers will be posted on the EPA website: www.epa.gov/brownfields under Job Training Grants
- Additional questions may be submitted electronically to EPA at bf.comments@epa.gov
- To submit questions via the US mail send to: Ms. LaKisha Odom, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment, MC-5105T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460.



Strengths and Weaknesses



Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- Meets all Eligibility Requirements
- Demonstrates need
- Documented Community Notice and Participation
- Documented Institutional Capacity
- Excellent Institutional Performance Record
- Credentialed and Experienced Instructors
- Leverage Funding for pre-requisite skills



Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- Documented Diverse Partnerships
- Employer Commitment to Hire
- Clearly Stated Measures of Success (MOS) with reasonable and Clear timeline
- Good discussion about Long-Term goals and strategies for sustainable growth.
- Letters of Support (LOS) current date and substantiate claims for institutional track record, proposed JTP activities and committed partners.



Strengths and Weaknesses

Weaknesses

- Proposal is vague or too wordy without adding merit to the substance.
- Eligibility Requirements are not met
- Inadequate discussion about the Community's challenges (economic and health) as a result of Brownfields.
- Little or no demographics to demonstrate need and show sensitive populations if any



Strengths and Weaknesses

Weaknesses

- Little or no Documented Community Notice and Participation
- No or insufficient discussion about Institutional Performance Record
- Insufficient information regarding Instructors' Credentials and Experience
- No documented Employer's Commitment to Hire



Strengths and Weaknesses

Weaknesses

- No Leverage Funding/In-kind services
- No discussion about how the cost of activities not allowed by EPA will be funded (child-care, student transportation and job-readiness and life-skills training)
- No documented Partnerships or not sufficiently discussed



Strengths and Weaknesses

Weaknesses

- Vague Measures of Success (MOS)
- No or Unclear Timeline
- Insufficient Letters of Support (LOS) – LOS do not substantiate claims for Institutional Track Record, Instructors' credentials, Proposed JTP Activities and Committed Partners



Recommendations



General Suggestions

- Read Guidelines!
- Quality of the Written Proposal and Proposed Project's Content, both are critical.
- Respond to All Elements in Guidelines
- Adhere to Suggested/Required Format (page limits, font size...)
- Follow format and sequence of guidelines when responding to evaluation criteria. (*Do not Make Reviewer Hunt For Answers*)



General Suggestions, cont.

- Read the Budget section carefully. Note what Activities Are Allowable Grant Expenses and those costs that are not allowed.
- Make Sure to Differentiate between Permitted and non-permitted costs in the budget and the budget narrative
 - Administrative Cost Ban (e.g., Indirect, "Admin-type" Activities, Supervision...)
 - Various banned Grant Activities (e.g., Cost for Student transportation, Life Skills and Job-readiness training, and Child-care, ...)



General Suggestions, cont.

- Forget the Whistles and Bells. Simple is best. Stapled documents printed on white pages with black ink is preferred.
- Be specific Whenever Possible, Stay on point Without Being Overly Detailed
- Include Table of Contents and Attachment Index
- Number document pages, including Attachments



General Suggestions, cont.

- Include header/ footer on each page noting applicant, proposal title and submittal date (because of the volume of received applications, pages can be lost while being copied)
- Define ALL Unique Terms or Acronyms Used
- Highlight Any Program Unique to your organization
- Incentive/Concept Related to Project (Makes Proposal Stand Out, Captures Reviewer's Attention)



General Suggestions, cont.

- Get Clarification on Any Guideline Element Not Fully Understood
- Do and document everything suggested for Community Notification and Participation. -- Then Do More!
- Attach all relevant and appropriate Documentation)
- **Start now!!!**



2004 Job Training – Projected Timeline

September 30, 2003	Federal Register Notice
December 1, 2003	Proposals are due
January 19, 2004	National JT Panel Convenes
February, 2004	Grant Recipients Announced

(Please note that dates are not final until published in the Federal Register Notice)



??? QUESTIONS ???

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